

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

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AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L FRANKFURT 7641

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: HESSEN CDU CONGRESS ON THE MARXIST CHALLENGE TO
THE FREE WORLD

SUMMARY: A CDU LAND HESSEN CONGRESS ON THE CHALLENGE
OF MARXISM TO THE FREE WORLD ON NOVEMBER 15 WAS ATTENDED
BY SOME 1000 PARTY MEMBERS AS WELL AS SUCH LEADING
CDU PERSONALITIES AS DR. ALFRED DREGGER, KURT
BIEDENKOPF, LEISLER KIEP AND OTHERS. THE CONGRESS
WAS A PERSONAL POLITICAL SUCCESS FOR DREGGER. MANY OF THE
PARTICIPANTS WERE PREOCCUPIED WITH THE THEN
PREVAILING INTERNAL CDU/CSU QUARREL WHICH AT LEAST FOR
THE MOMENT HAS SINCE BEEN SETTLED. CONCERNS ABOUT
THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF DETENTE AND THE OFFENSIVE
POLITICAL POSTURE OF THE SOVIET UNION ON INTERNAL
DEVELOPMENTS AND THE DEFENSE POSTURE OF THE ALLIANCE
DOMINATED THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE IN
FOUR WORKING GROUPS AS WELL AS THE OPENING AND
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CLOSING PLENARY SESSIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE LAND HESSEN CDU PARTY CONGRESS ON THE CHALLENGE OF MARXISM TO THE FREE WORLD HELD AT FLOERSHEIM JUST OUTSIDE FRANKFURT ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15 AND ATTENDED BY SOME 1000 PARTY FAITHFUL WAS OF SOME INTEREST AS AN INDICATION OF GRASS-ROOTS LOCAL CDU LEADERSHIP SENTIMENT ON A) THE PRINCIPAL SUBJECT ITSELF, B) RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND C) THE ONLY PARTIALLY RELATED TOPIC OF THE INTERNAL CONTROVERSY WITHIN THE CDU/CSU WHICH NOW APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SETTLED AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING.

2. THE VERY PRESENCE ON THE ROSTRUM OF CDU SECRETARY GENERAL KURT BIEDENKOPF NEXT TO ALFRED DREGGER, THE AGGRESSIVE AND HARD-HITTING LAND HESSEN CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY GAVE THE LEADERSHIP LAND HESSEN CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY GAVE THE LEADERSHIP A WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO DEMONSTRATE PARTY UNITY EVEN THOUGH BIEDENKOPF'S PRESENCE AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER WAS BILLED AS A LATE SUBSTITUTION FOR PROFESSOR HANS MAIER WHOSE ILLNESS PREVENTED HIM FROM ATTENDING. THE HEATED INTERNAL SQUABBLE -- STILL UNRESOLVED AS OF NOVEMBER 15 -- CLEARLY WAS VERY MUCH ON THE MINDS OF THOSE PRESENT. THE STRONGEST APPLAUSE WENT TO THOSE APPEALING FOR PARTY UNITY INCLUDING BUT BY NO MEANS LIMITED TO DREGGER'S APPEAL THAT QUOTE WE WANT TO SEE HELMUT KOHL AND FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS SIDE BY SIDE UNQUOTE. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONGRESS DREGGER OPPOSED CREATION OF A FOURTH PARTY BEFORE AND AFTER THE OCTOBER 1976 BUNDESTAG ELECTION, CLAIMED THAT CDU/CSU COHESION WAS ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESS, DENIED THAT SEPARATION OF THE TWO WOULD ENABLE THE PARTIES TO WIN FRINGE VOTES AND ASSERTED STRAUSS HAD NEVER FAVORED A FOURTH PARTY. (QUITE APART FROM THE FLOERSHEIM CONGRESS WE HAVE IN RECENT DAYS HAD NUMEROUS OTHER INDICATIONS OF RAPIDLY MOUNTING IMPATIENCE BY THE LOCAL CDU RANK AND FILE WITH THE ONGOING QUARREL WHICH QUITE A NUMBER ARE INCLINED TO LAY AT THE DOOR OF WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

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KOHL'S INADEQUATE LEADERSHIP.)

3. THE MAIN TOPIC OF THE CONGRESS WAS CONSIDERED NOT ONLY IN BIEDENKOPF'S THOUGHTFUL AND PROVOCATIVE ADDRESS (SUMMARY BEING MAILED TO EMBASSY BONN) BUT ALSO IN FOUR WORKING GROUPS AND ACCOMPANYING RESOLUTIONS. MAIN POINTS AND THEMES OF INTEREST WERE THE FOLLOWING:
A) STRUNG THROUGH ALL PHASES OF THE CONGRESS WAS

CONCERN THAT "DENTENTE" OR "ENTSPANNUNG" IS WORKING TO THE DEFINITE ADVANTAGE OF THE SOVIET UNION SINCE IN THE WEST IT HAS UNDERMINED THE WILL TO PROVIDE FOR AN ADEQUATE DEFENSE WITHOUT CREATING A COMPARABLE HANDICAP FOR THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP.

B) CONCERN ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL WAS SHARED AND PERHAPS EVEN EXCEEDED BY APPREHENSIONS THAT THE ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS MIGHT AGREE TO COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

C) HESSEN CDU CHAIRMAN DREGGER AS WELL AS CDU BUNDESTAG DEPUTY ERICH MENDE BOTH MADE INTERESTING REFERENCES TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT GERMAN UNITY AND SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE GERMAN PEOPLE COULD - ESPECIALLY IF THERE SHOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN EAST/WEST POWER RELATIONSHIPS - EVENTUALLY BECOME A COMMUNIST CAUSE PERHAPS, IN MENDE'S VIEW, SUPPORTED BY IDEALISTIC BUT UNINFORMED YOUTH. DREGGER APPEALED THAT THE FRG MUST REMAIN THE STANDARD BEARER OF GERMAN UNITY.

D) AN ATTEMPT BY CONGRESS LEADERSHIP TO RULE OUT DISCUSSION OF THE POLISH AGREEMENTS HAD ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS. LEISLER KIEP, CDU FOREIGN POLICY SPOKESMAN IN THE BUNDESTAG, AND ONE OF THE DISCUSSION LEADERS AT THE NOVEMBER 15 FLOERSHEIM CONGRESS RECEIVED SOME SUPPORT FOR HIS DISSENTING VIEWS IN FAVOR OF THE POLISH AGREEMENTS. IT WAS CLEAR HOWEVER THAT THE LARGE MAJORITY OF THE CDU PARTY MEMBERS PRESENT AT FLOERSHEIM ENDORSED THE NATIONAL PARTY POSITION OPPOSING THE AGREEMENTS.

E) THE SUBJECT OF EAST/WEST TRADE PREDICTABLY WAS A CONFIDENTIAL

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CONTROVERSIAL ONE PITTING ZDF MODERATOR SCHROEDER WHO SAW SUBSTANTIAL DANGERS IN EXTENSIVE TRADE CONNECTIONS WITH THE SOVIET BLOC AGAINST MANNESMANN BOARD MEMBER HEINZ HUFNAGEL WHO STRESSED ITS ADVANTAGES FOR EMPLOYMENT OF GERMAN WORKERS. IN A CONCLUDING NOTE ON THE SUBJECT DREGGER STRESSED THE PRIMACY OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE STATE TRADING MONOPLIES ECONOMIES OF THE EASTERN BLOC.

F) WITH RESPECT TO INTERNAL MATTERS PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF THE DELEGATES WAS DIRECTED TOWARD RADICAL LEFT WING CONDITIONING OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH SLANTING OF CURRICULA AND TEXTS ALLEGED COMMUNIST PENETRATION OF THE TRADE UNION LEADERSHIP AND LEFT WING MISREPRESENTATION OF EFFORTS TO PREVENT THE

ENTRY OF RADICAL EXTREMISTS AND COMMUNISTS
INTO THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

4. DISCUSSION AT THE CONGRESS INCLUDED A NUMBER OF
DIRECT REFERENCES TO THE UNITED STATES.

A) NOT SURPRISINGLY THERE WERE SOME CONCERNED REFERENCES
TO RECENT CABINET CHANGES IN WASHINGTON NOTABLY THE
RESIGNATION OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER. IN RESPONSE
RETIRED FRG ADMIRAL GUENTER POSER MADE A PERSUASIVE
CASE THAT THESE RECENT WASHINGTON DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD
BE SEEN IN TERMS OF AMERICAN INTERNAL POLITICS.
HE ADDED HOWEVER THAT IN AN ELECTION YEAR NO ENERGETIC
FOREIGN POLICY MEASURES (DRAFTAKTE) SHOULD BE EXPECTED
FROM THE UNITED STATES.

B) LEISLER KIEP RESPONDED EFFECTIVELY TO A QUESTION
ON THE RELIABILITY OF THE AMERICAN NUCLEAR COMMITMENT TO
THE DEFENSE OF BERLIN BY POINTING TO THE HIGHLY
UNLIKELY AND THEORETICAL NATURE OF A MILITARY ATTACK
LIMITED TO BERLIN.

C) AS PART OF PROPOSALS FOR AN OFFENSIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL
STANCE TOWARD THE OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF EASTERN EUROPE
DELEGATES PROPOSED THAT BONN URGE THE US TO
CONTINUE THE OPERATIONS OF RFE AND RADIO LIBERTY, AND
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THAT THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE DEUTSCHE WELLE BE
MAINTAINED. LEHMANN

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